



*Acting
Library*

Rural District of Bridgwater



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1964

BRIDGWATER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE 1964

Chairman

MR. F. W. MOVERLEY

Vice-Chairman

MR. E. STOREY

MR. R. T. ADDICOTT

MR. A. M. P. LUSCOMBE

MR. J. H. BRUCE KIDMAN

MR. F. W. MAWDSLEY

COL. R. A. C. COLDSTREAM

MR. R. MEADE

MR. F. C. EDWARDS
(Deputy Vice-Chairman of
Council (ex-officio))

MR. C. SELLICK
(Vice-Chairman of Council
(ex-officio))

MR. J. W. H. HANGER
(Chairman of Council
(ex-officio))

MR. B. L. SMITH

MR. H. R. HOBBS

DR. M. D. THOMSON

MR. E. R. JONES

DR. W. R. THROWER

MR. G. O. LOCKYER

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1964

Medical Officer of Health:

R. H. WATSON, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Assistant Medical Officer (Somerset C.C.)

CHRISTINE M. ROOKE, M.B., B.S.

Chief Public Health Inspector

F. A. MAILE, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors

D. J. EMM, M.A.P.H.I.

B. F. HITCHCOCK, M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.

A faint, light gray watermark of a classical building's facade, featuring four columns and a triangular pediment, serves as the background for the text.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b28950689>

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR 1964.

Tel: Bridgwater 4147/8

Health Department,
22 King Square,
BRIDGWATER.

July, 1965.

To: The Chairman and Members of the
Bridgwater Rural District Council

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the district, and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1964. The report is set out in the manner of previous years, so that comparison with former reports can easily be made.

The health of the Rural District has been good during the year. Very few infectious diseases were notified and the vital statistics continue to be satisfactory, and to compare favourably with those for the country as a whole.

Two new Acts of Parliament which came into force during the year have a bearing on the work of the Department. These are the Shops, Offices and Railway Premises Act, 1964, and the Housing Improvement Act, 1964. The first of these is intended to secure the health, safety and welfare of employees in the premises designated, and, as will be seen from the report of the Chief Public Health Inspector, a start was made on carrying out the inspections necessary to secure implementation of the provisions of the Act. The second Act gives Local Authorities power to require the improvement of tenanted dwellings in certain circumstances. The intention of this Act is to secure that houses which still have a reasonable life, but which lack amenities, are provided with a hot water supply, a fixed bath or shower, a wash hand basin, an inside lavatory, and a proper food store. The majority of houses which fall within the scope of this Act will be found in Urban areas and will be dealt with as "Improvement Areas", in which case the initiative for taking action rests with the Local Authority. In Rural Districts the problem is largely that of dealing with individual houses and, here, the initiative for taking action rests with the tenant. In many cases the tenants are either elderly people living on a fixed income or people in the lower income groups who are not prepared to initiate action which, while improving their living conditions, would result in an increased rent. It is felt that the Act will need to be strengthened if significant action is to be taken in dealing with houses outside "Improvement Areas", and it is hoped that legislation to this effect will be introduced.

/The problems

The problems created at lay-bys on highways by people in transit during the holiday season is highlighted in the report of the Chief Public Health Inspector. Bridgwater Rural District Council were probably the first Rural District Council in the country to draw attention to this nuisance, and the Council has pressed for some years, through the Rural District Councils' Association, for the provision of toilet accommodation at the larger and more popular lay-bys where it is found that 80 or more people may be spending the night. It is, therefore, pleasing to report that the Ministry of Transport has announced satisfactory proposals for the provision of toilets on a few selected main routes where the problem is particularly acute, and that the Bridgwater Rural District is one of those selected. The Council's plans for the provision of a toilet of this nature are already well advanced and it is hoped that the building can be in operation for part of the 1965 season. The experience gained from the provision of toilet accommodation on these selected stretches of trunk roads will be used in formulating future policy for dealing with the problem more generally in the country as a whole.

Nuisance caused by gipsies camping on road side verges is a matter which has concerned the Council for a long time. Bridgwater is an area where early peas are grown and gipsy labour is essential for gathering the crop. It was obvious that harrying these people from "pillar to post" was no answer to the problem, nor was it possible to take any effective action under the Public Health Acts. The Council investigated the possibility of themselves providing a suitable camp for the gipsies but inspection of the district failed to reveal any suitable sites which could be taken over and made available for this purpose. However, the Council then took the initiative in calling together the Produce Merchants concerned and, as a result, three licensed camps were set up by the Produce Merchants on their own land to cater for their own workers. This arrangement produced its own problems but it has certainly improved the situation for the Rural District as a whole, and also for the gipsies, and is in line with the more enlightened attitude which is beginning to develop in other parts of the country towards these people.

The Aberdeen typhoid epidemic which occurred in May, 1964, and which was considered to have been started by infection from polluted cooling water gaining access to corned beef during the canning process through a minute crack in a tin brought home to the public the great need for very high standards of hygiene among food handlers. The outbreak had repercussions locally and involved your Public Health Inspectors in a considerable amount of work in visiting all food premises in the area to secure that all stocks of potentially infected tins of corned beef were withdrawn and returned to the suppliers. However, at the same time, the opportunity was taken to check on food hygiene standards in our own establishments.

Lack of adequate accommodation in the Combined Office has caused concern for some considerable time, and it was therefore a great relief when we were able to take over the present building where we expect to remain until comprehensive

/development

development, with a view to concentrating all the County Council health services, can be carried out adjoining the Health Centre at Mount Street, Bridgwater.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Members of the Council, the other Chief Officers, and the Staff of the Health Department, for the help and co-operation which I have received during the year.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

R. H. WATSON

SUMMARY OF STATISTICSGENERAL STATISTICS

Area (acres)	86,000
Population (Census 1961)	21,985
Population (Registrar General's estimate 1964)	23,770
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1964	7,710
Rateable value on 31st December, 1964	£539,365
Sum represented by 1d. rate on 31st December, 1964	£2,078.16.10

Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1964

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	254	198	452
Illegitimate	9	10	19
	<u>263</u>	<u>208</u>	<u>471</u>
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population			19.81
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births			4.03
Stillbirths			8
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births			14.69
Total live and still births			479
Infant Deaths (deaths of infants under one year of age)			4
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - total			8.49
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - legitimate			8.05
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - illegitimate			21.5
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)			8.49
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)			8.49
Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births)			25.47
Maternal Mortality (including abortion)			Nil
Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still births			Nil
<u>Deaths</u>			
Total number of deaths			272
Death rate per 1,000 population			11.44

Births

After allowing for inward and outward transfers the Registrar General's figures show that there were 471 births (263 boys and 208 girls) in the Rural District during 1964, being 8 births more than in 1963. Of these births 19 were illegitimate. This is 4.03% of the total live births, as compared with 4.1% in 1963.

The birth rate of any area is dependent upon the composition of the population in that area. Obviously a population with a high proportion of persons of child bearing age will have more births per 1,000 of the population than an area with an unduly large number of people in the older age groups. To enable the birth rates of different areas to be compared, the Registrar General provides a comparability factor for each Local Authority area, which renders the birth rate of each area comparable with that of a district the population of which is of standard age and sex distribution. The birth rate for the Rural District adjusted in this manner is decreased from 21.10 to 20.80 per 1,000 of the population. The birth rate for England and Wales was 18.4.

Birth rates for the Rural District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964
Crude Birth Rate	18.59	18.54	17.64	20.10	19.81
Standardised Birth Rate	20.08	20.02	18.16	21.10	20.80
England and Wales	17.1	17.4	18.0	18.2	18.4

Deaths

The number of deaths registered in the Rural District during 1964 was 147. Of these 61 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand 131 deaths of Rural District residents registered outside the District. (84 at Taunton hospitals and 47 elsewhere). The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the District was 272 (146 males and 126 females). This was 23 less than the previous year and gave a crude death rate of 11.44 per 1,000 of the population.

The crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the populations of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution. The Registrar General therefore supplies an "Area Comparability Factor" and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can then be compared with that of the country as a whole, or of any other local area. The corrected death rate so obtained was 11.32 per 1,000 of the population, and this is compared with 11.3 for England and Wales.

Death rates for the District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964
Crude Death Rate	11.53	11.66	10.62	12.80	11.44
Standardised Death Rate	10.61	10.72	10.41	12.67	11.32
England and Wales	11.5	12.0	11.9	12.2	11.3

Of 272 deaths, 153 occurred in people over the age of 70 years. 83 occurred in people in the productive age groups 15 to 64 years, and the following table gives the details of deaths in this age group:-

	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
Respiratory Tuberculosis			1		1	2
Malignant neoplasm of lung bronchus			1		4	5
Malignant neoplasm of breast	1				2	3
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	1	2	5	7	15	
Diabetes				1		1
Vascular lesions of the nervous system		1	3	14	18	
Coronary disease and angina				3	11	14
Other heart disease					4	4
Other circulatory disease		1	1	2	4	
Pneumonia					4	4
Bronchitis					2	2
Other diseases of respiratory system			1		1	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	1	1	3	6	
Motor vehicle accidents	1			1		2
All other accidents				1		
Suicide		2		1		3
Homicide and operations of war						
	1	5	8	16	55	85

Cancer Mortality

The number of deaths from cancer of Rural District residents was 51 (males 31, females 20) as compared with 54 in 1963. They constitute 18.7% of the total deaths during the year.

The following table shows the localisation of the disease in the 51 cases:-

	Number of Deaths			
	Male	Female	Total	1964
Stomach	3	1	4	6
Lung, bronchus	11	-	11	9
Breast	-	5	5	5
Uterus	-	1	1	-
Other and unspecified organs	17	13	30	34
Total	31	20	51	54

Cancer of the Uterus

Before cancer of the cervix of the uterus actually occurs distinctive cells are shed from the lining of the womb, and it is now generally accepted that the incidence of invasive cancer of the cervix may be reduced by the detection and treatment of these precancerous conditions. Microscopic examination of smears taken by lightly scraping the neck of the womb (cervical smears) is the best method of detecting these cells. Evidence available suggests that there is an interval of several years between the first appearance of these abnormal cells and the stage of invasion of normal tissue by the cancer.

In theory, at least, the examination of every woman once every two or three years should be sufficient for the purpose of preventing this form of cancer, and there is a growing demand throughout the country for the provision of a service which provides for the taking and examination of these cervical smears. At the present time the main stumbling block in this area is that there are not sufficient trained technicians to examine the large number of smears which would be necessary under a system of routine examination.

Arrangements have been made for the examination of a limited number of cervical smears taken from women attending Family Planning Clinics. This, however, is an unsatisfactory arrangement and it is to be hoped that in due course a clinic for taking smears will be set up by the Local Health Authority and that a complete service will be provided for all those who wish to avail of it.

Cancer of the Lungs

The ages at which death occurred in the last four years combined is detailed in the following table:-

Year	Under 15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Over 65	Total
1961					2	3	6	11
1962				1	3	4	1	9
1963					1	3	5	9
1964				1	-	4	6	11
Total				2	6	14	18	40

Infantile Mortality

4 infants under one year of age died during the year. This gives an infantile mortality rate of 8.49 per 1,000 of all live births, while the corresponding rate for England and Wales was 20.0.

The following table shows the cause of the infant deaths in detail:-

	Under 1 week	1 - 4 weeks	1 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	Total under 1 year
Primary atelectasis	3				3
Congenital Heart Disease	1				1
Total	4				4

Deaths from Heart Disease

Of the 272 deaths, heart disease caused roughly 1 in every 3 (males 46, females 38). It represented 30% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 3.5 per 1,000 of the population.

Other Deaths

Road accidents accounted for two deaths.

Cause of Death	M	F	Total
All Causes	146	126	272
1. Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	2	1	3
2. Other forms of tuberculosis	-	-	-
3. Syphilitic disease	-	-	-
4. Diphtheria	-	-	-
5. Whooping Cough	-	-	-
6. Meningococcal infections	-	1	1
7. Acute poliomyelitis	-	-	-
8. Measles	-	-	-
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	-	-	-
10. Malignant neoplasm of stomach	3	1	4
11. Malignant neoplasm of lung, bronchus	11	-	11
12. Malignant neoplasm of breast	-	5	5
13. Malignant neoplasm of uterus	-	1	1
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	17	12	29
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-	1	1
16. Diabetes	-	3	3
17. Vascular lesions of the nervous system	23	23	46
18. Coronary disease and angina	35	24	59
19. Hypertension with heart disease	2	4	6
20. Other heart disease	9	10	19
21. Other circulatory disease	9	13	22
22. Influenza	-	-	-
23. Pneumonia	8	3	11
24. Bronchitis	9	3	12
25. Other diseases of the respiratory system	1	2	3
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	2	1	3
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	-	2	2
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	-	1	1
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	2	-	2
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-	-
31. Congenital malformations	2	1	3
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	8	11	19
33. Motor vehicle accidents	2	-	2
34. Suicide	1	3	4
35. Homicide and operations of war	-	-	-
36. All other accidents	-	-	-

Population

The estimated population of the Rural District as at June, 1964 was 23,770, which shows an increase of 730 on the previous year. The natural decrease in the population, that is the excess of births over deaths, was 193, and therefore there was an estimated increase in population of 344, probably due to immigration.

It is interesting to note the population changes which have taken place in recent years and the following table illustrates the trend since the 1961 census:-

Year	Population Increase	Natural Increase	Change due to Migration
1961	1,450	151	+ 1,299
1962	550	158	+ 392
1963	540	168	+ 372
1964	537	193	+ 344

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following Table sets out the cases of notifiable infectious diseases which were notified in the Rural District during 1964. The Table is drawn up after making the necessary amendments to the original notifications by either the practitioners or the Medical Officer at the Isolation Hospital, owing to corrections in diagnosis.

Disease	Cases notified	
	1964	1963
Scarlet Fever	8	16
Whooping Cough	13	6
Measles	72	372
Dysentery	-	3
Pneumonia	2	8
Fuerperal pyrexia	-	3
Food Poisoning	1	-
Erysipelas	1	-
Total	97	408

Measles

72 cases were notified. Treatment by modern drugs has done much to reduce the severity of the common complications of this highly infectious disease. Nevertheless despite its triviality measles consumes a considerable proportion of doctors working time in epidemic years, and for this reason alone its prevention would greatly help the family doctor. Also, considerable quantities of antibodies are prescribed in treating a great many cases and thus prevention would also effect a considerable economic saving. At the present time investigations into the efficiency of a new anti-measles vaccine are being carried out in different parts of the country and it may well be that before very long a useful addition may be made to the existing triple vaccine which protects children against Diphtheria, Whooping Cough and Tetanus.

Acute Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis)

(a) Cases: No cases were notified.

(b) Poliomyelitis Vaccination

The following table shows the number of persons who received a course of primary vaccination (two injections of Salk vaccine, three injections of quadruple vaccine or three doses of Oral vaccine) during 1964:-

Children born 1964	Children born 1963	Children born 1962	Children born 1943-61	Young persons born 1933-42	Persons under 40 years of age and Priority Groups						
Salk	Oral	Salk	Oral	Salk	Oral	Salk	Oral				
3	45	3	201	2	76	-	87	-	14	1	10

In addition to these primary vaccinations, a total of 447 children received booster doses of vaccine.

Tuberculosis

3 respiratory cases of Tuberculosis were notified, as compared with 4 respiratory and 1 non-respiratory case in 1964.

	<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-respiratory</u>
Number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at 31.12.64	57	7
Number of new cases during the year	3	-
Number of deaths during the year	3	-

The very low incidence of deaths due to Tuberculosis was maintained and reflects the efficacy of modern treatment. All new cases are thoroughly investigated and all known close contacts are invited to attend the Chest Clinic for investigation.

The following table shows the sex and age groups of cases notified during the year:-

Age	Under 5	5/14	15/24	25/44	45/64	65 & over	Age unknown	Total
Male	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Female	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2

B.C.G. Vaccination

In order to raise the immunity to Tuberculosis of school leavers, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to all children between the ages of 13 and 14 years attending schools in the Mid-Somerset Divisional Area. 489 accepted the offer and received a preliminary skin test, the "Heaf Test", to determine whether they had, in fact, already experienced some infection with Tuberculosis. 344 of these gave negative results and were vaccinated with the B.C.G. vaccine.

Mass Radiography

For many years it has been the practice for a Mass Radiography Unit to visit the large towns and villages at intervals of two years and to examine large numbers of people at public sessions. At first this was a most successful method of detecting Tuberculosis but in time it was found that the number of cases detected fell very considerably and there was a tendency for the same people to attend time after time. In an endeavour to make more efficient use of the Units it was decided to replace the old arrangement by one in which a Unit visited the large centres of population at regular and very frequent intervals. It was hoped that by thus making the facility for examination readily available General Practitioners would make more use of it and also that members of the public who had not previously been X-rayed would attend for examination. It is probably too early yet to assess the results of this new arrangement but it seems to be proving popular. At the present time a Mass Radiography Unit attends at the Bridgwater Health Centre every second Tuesday from 1.30 to 3.00 p.m. An average of 23 people attend. It is, however, an expensive service and it may well be that when the X-ray Department at Bridgwater Hospital is improved some further changes may be indicated.

Meanwhile, in Rural areas, periodic visits will continue to be made to the larger villages.

Food Poisoning

1 case was notified.

Diphtheria

No cases of diphtheria were notified. During the year 182 children under the age of 5 years and 8 children between the ages of 5 - 15 were immunised against diphtheria, giving a total of 190. In addition to this primary immunisation, 305 children received booster injections.

Tetanus Immunisation

Tetanus immunisation is now combined with diphtheria immunisation almost as a routine, and practically all infants receiving primary immunisation and all school children receiving booster injections are offered a combined vaccine.

The number of children who completed a full course of primary immunisation in the year ended 31st December, 1964, was as follows:-

1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	54-58	49-53	Total
107	237	46	7	-	55	20	-	472

In addition to these primary immunisations 543 children received booster injections.

Vaccination against Smallpox

The number of recorded vaccinations was as follows:-

Under 1		1		2-4		5-15		15 or over		Totals	
P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R
58	-	65	-	15	1	6	5	20	33	164	39

P = Primary vaccination

R = Re-vaccination

GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES

Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens are sent to the Laboratory at Musgrove Park Hospital, which forms part of the Public Health Laboratory Service. Results of investigations are available with the minimum of delay and there is good liaison between the laboratory personnel and the field workers in the Public Health Department.

Examinations carried out during the year included:-

Water Samples	52
Ice Cream Samples	29
Food Samples	11

Hospitals

Hospitals in the area are administered by the South Western Regional Hospital Board, through the Bridgwater Area Management Committee.

The hospitals are:-

Bridgwater General Hospital	72 beds
Mary Stanley Nursing Home	31 beds
Northgate Lodge	60 beds

Cases of infectious diseases needing hospital treatment, or isolation, are admitted to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

The Rural District Council, in conjunction with the Bridgwater Borough Council, have continued their efforts to secure improved hospital facilities in Bridgwater and it is therefore satisfactory to record that at the time of writing this report the Regional Hospital Board have announced their decision to provide a new Casualty Department at Bridgwater General Hospital during the next financial year. The space occupied by the existing Department can then be used to provide much needed improvements to the Out-patient and X-ray Departments.

Ante-Natal Clinics

No Local Authority Ante-Natal Clinics are held in the area, supervision being conducted by General Practitioners and Midwives. A number of expectant mothers attend at the Clinic at the Health Centre, Mount Street, Bridgwater, when blood samples are taken for determination of blood groups, Rhesus Factor etc. During 1964 897 persons attended. The corresponding figure for the previous year was 923.

Infant Welfare

Infant Welfare Clinics, for which the County Council are responsible, are held at Ashcott, Cannington, Edington, Goathurst, East Huntspill, West Huntspill, Moorland, Nether Stowey, North Petherton, Pawlett, Puriton, Spaxton, Westonzoyland and Woolavington.

National Assistance Act, 1948 - Section 47

A number of cases were assisted through informal action, and in no case was it necessary for the Council to take statutory action to secure the admission of an old person to suitable accommodation.

Admission to Hospital

To assist the Geriatric Department at Trinity Hospital, Taunton, to determine the priority for admission of old people to hospital beds, and to provide the Geriatrician with information on the home background of hospital patients which would be useful in arranging the discharge of old people from hospital, arrangements have now been made for the Health Department to be informed of all applications for admission to hospital of old people, and a comprehensive report is sent without delay to the Geriatrician.

Home Help Service

This service is provided by the County Council, with local administration by the Home Help Organiser, with an office at the Health Centre, Mount Street, Bridgwater.

The Home Helps have proved of very considerable value and much assistance was given to needy cases. During the year 141 cases received assistance.

These included the following types:-

Maternity	29
Old age and infirmity	73
Chronic sick	22
Post operation	5
Emergency illness	2
Other cases	12

The number of Home Helps at 31st December, 1964, was as follows:-

Full time	8
Part time	19

Welfare of Old People

The Rural District now assist the W.V.S. in providing Meals on Wheels for old people, and this worthwhile service is greatly appreciated by the recipients. The scheme is at present operating in certain parts of the District, but it is hoped to extend the service wherever there is need.

Common Lodging Houses

There are no registered Common Lodging Houses in the District.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

The Chilton Polden sewerage scheme has been completed and is proving most satisfactory. At the time of writing the Woolavington and East Huntspill scheme is well advanced. Whilst a number of sewerage schemes for the larger villages remain with the Consulting Engineers, the decision of the Council to provide the administrative set up to enable the Council's Engineer to undertake the planning and supervision of schemes for the smaller villages has given a considerable impetus to the Council's programme for providing satisfactory sewerage and sewage disposal systems throughout the District. It is to be anticipated, therefore, that in the near future work will commence on a number of quite urgent schemes.

To assist ratepayers who live in the more remote parts of the District and who as consequence are unable to benefit from the considerable expenditure incurred by the provision of sewage schemes the Council have introduced a cesspool emptying scheme whereby cesspools in properties which cannot be connected to a sewer are emptied at greatly reduced cost to the occupier. The Council utilise the services of a contractor for this purpose.

Water Supplies

Sampling of water supplies was continued and results generally were highly satisfactory. In those cases where results were not up to standard no special measures, apart from increasing chlorination, were necessary. An exception was the Goathurst private supply. 5 out of 12 samples of this water submitted for bacteriological examination gave unsatisfactory results and showed varying degrees of contamination. Some samples were grossly polluted. It has been demonstrated clearly that this supply is easily contaminated and it needs only a case or carrier of enteric fever to pollute the gathering grounds to trigger off an explosive outbreak of the disease amongst the consumers. It is therefore essential that the supply be closed if it cannot adequately be protected from pollution. In the meantime, the consumers have been advised to boil all water used for human consumption. The administrative measures leading to the closure of this supply have, in fact, proceeded and it is hoped that the provision of a safe water supply to this village will not be very much longer delayed.

Results of bacteriological tests generally can be summarised as follows:-

Supply	Number of examinations	Report	
		Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
Fiddington	12	10	2
Goathurst	12	7	5
Willoughby	14	14	-
Over Stowey	12	10	2
Thurloxton	1	-	1

Chemical analysis of Fiddington, Willoughby and Over Stowey supplies was continued as a matter of routine. Reports were as follows:-

Report of Chemical Analysis of Sample of Water

received on 8.6.64.

Labelled: Fiddington Public Supply from tap

	Parts per million
Physical Characters	Clear and bright. Hazen units less than 5
Reaction	Neutral
pH	7.0
Free Carbon Dioxide	10.0
Total Solids	375.0
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO_3)	255.0
Carbonate Hardness	255.0
Non-carbonate Hardness	35.0
Total Hardness	290.0
Chloride (as Cl)	20.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	0.002
Nitrate	6.5
Nitrite	Nil
Albuminoid	0.012
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hrs. at 27°C	0.10
Sediment	None
Iron - Copper - Lead - Zinc	Nil

This is a hard water, the hardness being very largely temporary, of satisfactory chemical purity.

Report of Chemical Analysis of Sample of Water

received on 8.6.64

Labelled: Willoughby Public Supply from tap

	Parts per million
Physical Characters	Clear and bright Hazen Units less than 5
Reaction	Slightly Alkaline
pH	7.6
Free Carbon Dioxide	1.0
Total Solids	200.0
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO_3)	130.0
Carbonate Hardness	130.0
Non-carbonate Hardness	30.0
Total Hardness	160.0
Chloride (as Cl)	21.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	0.002
Albuminoid	0.010
Nitrate	2.4
Nitrite	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hrs. at 27°C	0.10
Sediment	None
Iron - Copper - Lead - Zinc	Nil

This is a moderately hard water of satisfactory chemical purity.

Report of Chemical Analysis of Sample of Water	
Received on 8.6.64.	
Labelled: Over Stowey Public Supply from Hockpit standpipe	
	<u>Parts per million</u>
Physical Characters	Slight yellow colour
Reaction	Hazen units
pH	Very slightly alkaline
Free Carbon Dioxide	7.3
Total Solids	1.0
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO ₃)	70.0
Carbonate Hardness	20.0
Non-carbonate Hardness	
Total Hardness	30.0
Chloride (as Cl)	16.0
Ammonical Nitrogen (as N)	0.002
Albuminoid	0.038
Nitrate	Nil
Nitrite	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 27°C	0.80
Sediment	None
Iron - Copper - Lead - Zinc	Nil

This is a soft water of satisfactory chemical purity.

Housing

During 1964 the Local Authority erected 88 houses compared with 50 in 1963. Private enterprise built 222 houses in 1964, compared with 183 in 1963. At the end of the year there were approximately 290 applications for Council houses, compared with 450 at the end of the previous year.

At the time of writing this report, work on the task of complete redevelopment of the Woolavington Housing Estate is proceeding satisfactorily. A good start has been made and the period for completion of this scheme has been reduced from five to two and a half years. This is particularly welcomed as the condition of many of the existing houses is causing concern.

The number of post-war houses built in the Rural District from 1st April, 1945 to 31st December, 1964 was as follows:-

(a) Erected by the Local Authority	941
(b) Erected by Private Enterprise	1,898

Improvement Grants

Owners of many properties have been informed of the benefits of these grants and have been urged to bring their properties up to modern standards. The following table summarises the action taken:-

Received		Approved	
Applications	No. of Dwellings	Applications	No. of Dwellings
25	27	25	27

Sanitary Inspection of the Area

The records given in the Chief Public Health Inspector's Report show the number of insanitary conditions dealt with.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

FOR 1964

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my twenty-fifth Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 1964.

STAFF.

The staff of the Department consists of Chief Public Health Inspector, two additional Public Health Inspectors and female clerk-typist. All the Public Health Inspectors hold the Meat and Food Inspectors Certificate in addition to the statutory qualification.

COMPLAINTS AND NUISANCES.

The number of complaints investigated during the year was 122, an increase of 6 on the previous year. In most cases nuisances were abated as a result of informal action and it was only found necessary to serve 4 Statutory Notices. On inspection a number of complaints were found to be not justified and no further action was taken in regard to them.

Of the nuisances found, 93 were abated during the year. The number of visits made in connection with nuisances was 344.

The new system of sewers and sewage disposal works for the village of Chilton Polden was completed during the year, and this resulted in the termination of the gross pollution of ditches which had been in existence for many years.

In addition, work was commenced at Woolavington on the joint sewerage scheme for the villages of Woolavington, East Huntspill and Cossington, and with the advantage of favourable weather conditions, good progress was made. The completion of this scheme will make possible the elimination of serious drainage nuisances which now exist in each of these villages.

The Council have for some time given considerable thought to the problem of insanitary conditions at lay-bys and other stopping places, particularly on trunk roads and other roads which carry heavy traffic. During the summer months, especially at weekends and after public holidays, these places are extensively littered with paper, empty food tins, bottles and discarded food. Litter receptacles have been provided, but in spite of frequent emptying, they are often filled to over-flowing, and many people do not take the trouble to use them. In addition to unsightliness, scraps of food left in food tins or unwanted food thrown away are a great attraction for rats and it is necessary for frequent visits to be made by the Rodent Operative to deal with the resultant rat infestation.

COMPLAINTS AND NUISANCES (continued)

A more serious aspect of this problem is the lack of toilet facilities, and this results in the fouling of hedgerows etc. on adjoining agricultural land to such an extent that a serious public health risk is created. The increasing traffic congestion in towns makes it difficult for motorists to stop in order to use existing lavatories, and this makes the problem in rural areas even more acute. The geographical situation of the District, roughly half-way between the Midlands and the holiday areas of the South-West, makes it a convenient stopping place for motorists for rest and refreshment., and during the summer months lay-bys are regularly used for over-night stops by motorists and caravanners.

The provision of suitable lavatories at lay-bys is considered by the Council to be urgently required and consultations are taking place as to how they can be provided, and what form they should take.

WATER SUPPLY.

Samples of water for bacteriological examination are taken at monthly intervals from the four sources of supply serving most of the District and are forwarded to the Public Health Laboratory, Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton for examination.

A total of 58 visits was made in connection with water supply during the year.

HOUSING.

The total number of visits under the Housing Acts was 767, the number of separate houses inspected being 360.

As in previous years a considerable number of informal repair notices were sent to owners, and these were followed up where necessary with re-inspections and negotiations with property owners and their agents or builders to consider details of the required repairs.

The serious shortage of building labour continues, and it is usually found that although builders are prepared to accept repair work, they invariably have such a large amount of work previously booked that they are only able to commence operations after very long delay. This factor coupled with the high cost of building increases the reluctance of owners to undertake repairs to their property. The large amount of new building which is going on in the District also reduces the labour force available for repair work.

As in previous years, a large number of applications for Improvement Grants were dealt with and schedules of disrepair were supplied where appropriate to ensure that the property was brought up to a reasonable standard as a condition of grant. In a number of cases the granting of a loan towards the applicants share of the cost made possible the carrying out of work which otherwise would have been beyond the applicants means.

HOUSING (continued)

During the year 103 houses were repaired and improved as a result of the service of informal notices.

7 houses were represented as unfit for habitation and incapable of being rendered fit at reasonable cost and 3 Demolition Orders and 3 Closing Orders were made by the Council. In 3 cases, the Council agreed to accept undertakings to carry out approved works within a stipulated time. 7 houses subject to Demolition Orders were demolished during the year.

6 families were transferred during the year from condemned houses into Council houses.

84 visits were made during the year to 24 properties in regard to the reconditioning and alteration of existing houses and the installation of new sanitary fittings.

14 visits were made to houses in respect to which grants had been made under the Housing (Financial Provisions) Acts.

69 visits were made in connection with applications for Improvement Grants, and 104 inspections of property were made to ascertain if conditions of grant were being fulfilled. In a number of cases it was found that dwellings were not being maintained to the standard required by the Act and in these cases the attention of owners was drawn to their obligations and they were requested to carry out such work as was considered to be necessary.

OVERCROWDING.

No new cases of overcrowding were discovered during the year.

3 visits were made in connection with overcrowding.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

The following particulars indicate the action taken under Part 1 of the Factories Act, 1937:-

	Number on Register	Insp's	Number of written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority.	2	2	-	
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority.	70	77	3	
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises).				
TOTAL	72	79	3	

The 79 visits were made in respect to 72 factories.

	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted	
	Found	Remedied	Referred			
			To H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Insp.		
Vant of cleanliness	1					
Overcrowding (S.2)						
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)						
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)						
Ineefective drainage of floor (S.6)						
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)						
(a) Insufficient						
(b) Unsuitable or defective						
(c) Not separate for sexes						
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	1	4				
TOTAL	2	4				

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT.

At the end of the year 81 premises had been registered, and 194 persons were employed in these registered premises, 58 males and 136 females.

Only a very few general inspections of registered premises were carried out, as in spite of widespread publicity many applications for registration were not received until after several reminders had been given.

BAKEHOUSES.

21 visits were made to the 10 bakehouses in the District and where defects or unsatisfactory conditions were found informal notices were served.

In one case where serious contraventions of the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960 had persisted for some time and warning letters had been ignored, it was decided to institute proceedings for offences under the Regulations, but the hearing had not taken place at the end of the year.

SHOPS.

438 inspections of shops were carried out in respect of the 259 premises in the District.

GENERAL SANITATION.

The following improvements were carried out, generally as a result of informal action:-

W.Cs.	18
Baths	5
Sinks	10
Drainage systems	6
Lavatory basins	16
Urinal	1
Flushing cistern	1

A number of other minor improvements were also carried out.

FOOD HYGIENE.

A great deal of time has again been spent on implementing the provisions of the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960, 402 inspections having been made of the 319 premises in the District to which the Regulations apply. In all but a few premises the standard of hygiene maintained is very good, but in these few cases frequent and regular visits are necessary in order to impress on persons responsible and their employees the need for constant care and vigilance in the hygienic preparation and handling of food.

FOOD HYGIENE (continued)

Where contraventions of the Regulations were found informal action was taken which resulted in 66 deficiences being remedied. In addition, the following improvements in facilities and equipment were installed:-

Refrigerators	7
Refrigerated Display Counters	4
Washbasins	5
Water heaters	1
Sinks	2
Sterilising Sinks	1
Floors and walls tiled	4
Premises modernised	9
W.C.	1

The number and types of food premises in the District are as follows:-

Ice Cream Factory	1
Licenced houses and Clubs	71
Bakehouses	10
Butchers	15
Slaughterhouses	5
Poultry and Rabbit Packers	2
Dairies	10
Cafes	18
School Kitchens	40
Food Preparing premises	53
Food Shops	93
Fish and Chip Shop	1

319

LICENSED PREMISES.

88 inspections of licensed premises were carried out, and a number of improvements were brought about by informal action, including the complete renewal on modern lines of the sanitary accommodation at four premises.

Two licensed houses were closed during the year.

MEAT AND FOODS.

There are five licensed slaughterhouses in the District.

The Puriton slaughterhouse was not used until the end of June, and from then until the end of September it was used for killing for retail sale only. From the beginning of October, the slaughterhouse was again used for the wholesale trade. Improvements to the drainage of this slaughterhouse were carried out during the year and a large cold store was installed.

MEAT AND FOODS (continued)

Two slaughterhouses operate a considerable wholesale trade; one slaughterhouse is used for the slaughter of animals for a number of butchers in the neighbourhood; the remaining slaughterhouse was not in use throughout the year. Most of the meat produced at the wholesale slaughterhouses is sent to the London wholesale markets, but a considerable quantity is also sent to Bristol and Bath, whilst a comparatively small amount goes to local retail butchers.

The number of animals slaughtered decreased by over 23% of the previous years total. This was chiefly by reason of the temporary closure of the Puriton Slaughterhouse but there was also a considerable shortage of animals for slaughter, particularly in the number of calves which was 3,335 less than in the previous year.

921 visits were made in connection with the inspection of meat, and 20,756 carcasses were inspected, a decrease of 6,393 on the previous year, and giving an average of 22.5 animals per visit. The numbers of the different kinds of animals inspected were as follows:-

Beasts	2,010
Cows	126
Calves	5,456
Sheep	9,565
Pigs	3,599

Approximately 12 tons of meat were condemned during the year, details of which are as follows:-

Beasts.

Carcases and organs	6
Heads and tongues	11
Livers	156
Lungs	20
Hearts	5
Diaphragms	6
Beef	1,877 lbs.

Cows.

Carcases and organs	12
Heads and tongues	1
Livers	24
Lungs	3
Kidneys	3
Hearts	1
Beef	858 lbs.

Calves.

Carcases and organs	52
Livers	3
Kidneys	9
Plucks	6
Veal	27 lbs.

MEAT AND FOODS (continued)

Sheep.

Carcasses and organs	36
Livers	168
Lungs	3
Plucks	15
Kidney	1
Mutton	161 lbs.

Pigs.

Carcasses and organs	19
Heads and tongues	17
Livers	50
Kidney	1
Lungs	42
Plucks	42
Hearts	33
Diaphragms	3
Pork	176 lbs.

Other Foods.

1 goat carcase and organs
56 tins - Various foods.

MEAT AND FOODS (continued)

Carcasses and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during the year:-

	Cattle exc. cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number inspected	2,010	126	5,456	9,565	3,599	-
<u>All diseases except</u> <u>Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis</u> - whole carcasses condemned	6	12	52	36	19	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	207	49	74	231	191	-
% of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci	10.60	48.41	2.31	2.84	5.83	-
<u>Tuberculosis only -</u> Whole carcasses condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	19	-
% of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	.53	-
<u>Cysticercosis.</u> Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	4	-	-	-	-	-
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	4	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and total condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-

Condemned meat is normally disposed of to manufacturers of animal feeding stuffs and fertilisers where it is processed and sterilised by steam under pressure.

PRESERVED FOODS.

There are 13 premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 for the manufacture of sausages, or potted, pressed, pickled and preserved foods.

The bacteriological examination of samples of prepared foods continued during the year and 11 samples were obtained, all of which were reported as containing no pathological organisms. The variety of foods sampled, included sausages, brawn, faggots, pies, pasties, tongue, ham and pressed beef.

MILK AND DAIRIES.

The number of retail purveyors of milk on the register is 8 and 9 visits were made for the inspection of dairies during the year.

ICE CREAM.

The number of premises registered for the storage and sale of ice cream at the end of the year was 103, and three premises were also registered for the manufacture of ice cream. Two of these manufacturers produced ice cream by the "cold mix" method, followed by boiling the product.

29 samples were taken during the year, all of which were placed in Provisional Grade 1.

A total of 119 visits were made in connection with the manufacture, storage and sale of ice cream.

KNACKERS YARD.

The knackers yard at Dunball is being maintained in very good condition and was visited on 3 occasions during the year.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

214 visits were made during the year in connection with moveable dwellings.

There are 23 camping sites in the district, all of which are small. In addition, there are 34 caravans on individual sites.

Many complaints were again received in regard to gypsy camps occupied by persons employed by produce merchants during the pea picking season.

These camps are very difficult to control by reason of the objectionable habits of the persons who use them, but the three licensed sites were fairly well maintained although not supervised by the owners to the extent necessary for this type of camp.

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS AND PET SHOPS.

Eight licences have been issued to the proprietors of Animal Boarding Establishments and there is one licensed Pet Shop, the licence being restricted to the sale of cage birds, gold fish and tropical fish.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Five disinfections were carried out during the year, and a total of 369 visits were made in connection with infectious diseases.

The number of visits is unusually large by reason of the request from the Ministry of Health to arrange for the withdrawal of certain cans of Corned Beef in connection with the outbreak of typhoid fever at Aberdeen.

SUMMARY OF VISITS.

Water Supply	58
Drainage	72
New Work	84
Nuisances	344
Refuse Disposal	11
Shop Acts	442
Factories	79
Schools	44
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	8
Housing (Slum Clearance)	176
Housing Repairs	379
Improvement Grants	173
Housing (F.P.) Acts	14
Overcrowding	3
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	22
Moveable Dwellings	214
Infectious Diseases	369
Rodent Infestation(Sewer Survey)	14
Other Pest Control	8
Meat Inspection	952
Food Shops	148
Bakehouses	21
School Kitchens	42
Other Food Preparing Premises	65
Licenced Premises and Clubs	88
Dairies	9
Ice Cream	119
Miscellaneous Food Visits	12
Ice Cream Samples	29
Preserved Food Samples	4
Food Poisoning	2
Slaughterhouses	13
Knackers Yard	3
Animal Boarding Establishments	29
Miscellaneous	54
Fire Escapes	18
Waste Food Boiling Plants	7

4,129

-----0-----

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and
Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

F. A. MAILE

Chief Public Health Inspector



